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(C)   REMARKS AND ARGUMENTS

1.   No New Matter

It is submitted that the present amendments introduce no new matter into the application. All subject matter contained in the application, as amended hereby, was expressly described in or is reasonably inferable from the originally-filed specification, claims, abstract, and/or drawings.

2.   Amendments to the Claims

(a)   Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) - USPN 6,529,620 (Thompson)

In paragraphs 3-11 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1-7, 9-16, 18, and 20 as being anticipated by USPN 6,529,620 (Thompson). The Examiner states (at ¶3.b) that Thompson discloses the step of "installing [a] memory button [computer readable medium] on or in the equipment unit in convenient proximity to a selected inspection and maintenance point[.]" Applicant respectfully suggests that the Thompson makes only the general statement that a computer readable medium may be installed on the object to be maintained, and does not disclose the installation of such medium in proximity to selected inspection and maintenance points.

The Examiner states (at ¶3.c) that Thompson discloses the step of "providing a memory button probe 55 (Figure 2) for transferring data to, and reading data stored in, the memory button[.]" Applicant respectfully disputes this finding. Reference number 55 in Thompson is defined (at Col. 6, Lines 49-51) as "[an] inspection port formed on the engine housing 53 [which] may be used to facilitate inserting the input device to enable the user to obtain the desired data." The "input device" is described (at Col. 6, Lines 47-49) as "a suitable data input device (such as a camera, scope, microphone, etc.) . . . coupled to the apparatus 20 via a link 54." It is clear from this statement that the input device is solely intended to gather visual or sound information from inside the inspection port 55, and there is no indication or suggestion that the data input device is capable of

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transfer of data to a memory button. It is apparent, therefore, that unlike the memory button probe of the present invention, the input device which is insertable into inspection port 55 in Thompson does not transfer data to, or read data stored in, a memory button (or other read/write memory device) mounted on an equipment unit.

On the foregoing analysis, Applicant respectfully submits that Thompson does not in fact anticipate independent Claims 1 and 10. For greater clarity and specificity, however, Claims 1 and 10 are presently amended to indicate that:

- [in Claims 1 and 10] the portable computing device with memory has a *user interface whereby a user may enter user-defined data and commands into said memory*;

- [in Claims 1 and 10] each memory button is a read-write memory chip *with a unique and unalterable identification number*, and is *encased in an armoured container* which has *contact means electrically connected to the memory chip*;

- [in Claims 1 and 10] the memory button probe has *contact means for contacting engagement with the contact means of the memory button*;

- [in Claim 1] each memory button is mounted on or in the equipment unit, *in proximity to a selected component* of the equipment unit;

- [in Claim 10] *technical information relating to the equipment unit is stored in the database of the central computer*; and

- [in Claim 10] the transfer of data between the portable computing device and the memory buttons is accomplished *by engaging the contact means of the memory button probe with the contact means of the memory button*.

Applicant respectfully submits that the foregoing amendments remove any basis for argument that Claims 1 and 10 are anticipated by the Thompson reference.

(b)   *Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) - USPN 6,170,742 (Yacoob)*

In paragraphs 15-20 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1-20 as being anticipated by USPN 6,170,742 (Yacoob). The Examiner states (at ¶15) that Yacoob discloses a memory button (i.e. "smart card") and a portable computing device with memory. Applicant submits that these components from Yacoob are distinctly different from any arguably analogous components in the present invention in that:

- the portable computing device of Yacoob is an onboard computer – i.e., built into the equipment unit (vehicle) -- and is thus not portable in the same sense as the portable computing device of the present invention; and

- the smart card of Yacoob (like the computer readable medium of Thompson) is not installed in proximity to a selected, specific inspection and maintenance point, as in the present invention.

On the foregoing analysis, Applicant respectfully submits that Yacoob does not in fact anticipate independent Claims 1 and 10. In any event, Applicant respectfully submits that the previously described amendments to Claims 1 and 10 have removed any basis for argument that Claims 1 and 10 are anticipated by the Yacoob reference.

(c)   *Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) -- Thompson*

In paragraphs 12-14 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 8, 17, and 19 as being obvious in view of Thompson. Applicant respectfully submits that this issue has been rendered moot by virtue of the present amendments to independent Claims 1 and 10, such that Claims 8, 17, and 19 are allowable on the basis that each is now dependent from an allowable base claim.

(d)   *Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) – Fieramosca and Flicker*

In paragraphs 21-23 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1-20 as being obvious having regard to Fieramosca (USPN 5,950,149) in view of Flicker (USPN 6,101,433). This rejection is based in part on the Examiner's statement (at ¶21) that Flicker discloses the step of storing inspection and maintenance information in memory buttons on equipment. Applicant respectfully suggests, however, that Flicker does not in fact disclose or suggest storage and retrieval of inspection and maintenance information. Flicker provides for no storage of information on an equipment-mounted memory button other than the automatic recording of time-of-operation data for a specific equipment unit (see Col. 3, Lines 10-15). Furthermore, Flicker does not in disclose or suggest locating one or more memory buttons in proximity to selected inspection and maintenance points, as in the present invention. As well, neither Fieramosca nor Flicker discloses or suggests either storage or retrieval of user-definable inspection and maintenance information.

On the foregoing analysis, Applicant respectfully submits neither Claim 1 nor Claim 10 is obvious having regard to Fieramosca (USPN 5,950,149) in view of Flicker. In any event, Applicant respectfully submits that any arguable basis for an obviousness rejection has been removed by virtue of the previously described amendments to Claims 1 and 10, which add limitations clearly not disclosed or suggested in either Fieramosca or Flicker.

(e)   *Other Claim Amendments*

Claim 1 has been generally re-organized with respect to the order and format in which certain limitations are recited (e.g., portable computing device and first data transfer link).

Claim 10 has been similarly re-organized with respect to the order and format in which the portable computing device and first data transfer link are recited.

Claim 10 has been further amended by deleting original sub-paragraphs (f), (g), (h), (i), and (m). The limitation from original sub-paragraph (f) has been merged into sub-paragraph (e).

Claim 19 has been amended to correct a syntax error by adding "the" before the words "user computer".

New dependent Claims 21-24 have been added, corresponding respectively to original sub-paragraphs (g), (h), (i), and (m) deleted from Claim 10 as indicated above.

New independent Claim 25 is an omnibus claim incorporating the limitations of Claims 10 and 21-24.

3.   Amended and New Claims are Allowable

On the basis of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claims 1 and 10 and new independent Claim 25 are all allowable. It follow, therefore, that dependent Claims 2-9 and 11-24 are allowable as well.

(D) CONCLUDING REMARKS

Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments presented herein have fully addressed all issues raised in the Office Action, and that the application will be in condition for allowance upon entry of the amendments. Accordingly, Applicant requests timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Applicant,
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